



Making science accessible

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If your idea of science education is a dry lecture and a blackboard full of complicated equations, then two sets of events organized by the Laboratory's Bradbury Science Museum should put you straight.

Scientist in the Spotlight, which takes place on the second Saturday of every month at the Bradbury, gives visitors to the museum a chance to meet Laboratory scientists and discuss their work with them.

"The scientists set up demonstrations or hands-on activities, and it's a relaxed way to learn about the range of work that's going on at the Laboratory," says Stacy Baker from the Bradbury, who organizes the events.

Recent topics have included where our energy comes from, the strange world of fungi, and using social media to forecast the spread of infectious diseases.

"It's a good opportunity to leverage the scientific talent at the Laboratory to reach out to museum visitors, local and otherwise, and demonstrate science on a relatable level," says Baker. "We want to make STEM topics accessible to everyone."

Sandy Frost, an electrical and computer engineer at the Laboratory, has discussed how software is all around us in her Spotlight sessions. "Science conversations are a two-way street," she says. "When people share stories, concerns and "what ifs" about science, it opens the door for new insights, opportunities and next steps – for all involved."

Would you like a drink with that?

The Museum's **Science on Tap** program takes the aim of accessibility to an even more informal location – unQuarked Wine Room in Los Alamos. On the third Monday of the month (unless that's a public holiday, in which case the date shifts), a Laboratory scientist talks about their topic for around twenty minutes, before taking questions.

Visitors can enjoy some food or a drink, and learn about subjects that may have been in the news directly from experts in the field.

Recent presenter Rebecca Holmes talked about her work developing electronic identifiers to track the more than 800 small satellites orbiting our planet. "The most unique thing about was that I couldn't project slides the way I would for any other scientific presentation," she says. "That is a good thing for this type of talk, but it requires a lot of preparation. I had to find props and visual aids to share with the audience."

All ages are welcome, and the sessions are a joint project between the Bradbury Science Museum and the [Los Alamos Creative District](#).

Holmes is clear on the benefits of Scientist in the Spotlight and Science on Tap to both the audience and presenter. “The questions and participation from the audience were fantastic. Their curiosity kept me on my toes,” she says.

“These questions remind me why I was interested in science in the first place. I also believe that it would be good for our country if every American could say “I know a scientist,” and got to interact with that scientist as a person and a neighbor.”

> *For upcoming events, check the [Bradbury Science Museum's calendar](#).*

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